

ESSENTIALS OF HUMAN ANATOMY. By R. T. Woodburne. Fifth Edition. (Pp. x+629; 468 figures including 11 full colour plates. £8.25). New York, London and Toronto: Oxford University Press. 1973.

PROFESSOR WOODBURN'S textbook was first published in 1957, and it is now in its 5th edition; it has met with the approval of teachers and students in many parts of the world. The book gives a sensible, accurate, clear account of the structure of the human body, with functional and clinical relevance constantly in mind. It is designed, by a teacher of long experience, to be used as a companion to dissecting room studies: it therefore examines the body regionally, from superficial to deep; and by frequent cross-references, synoptic illustrations and stress on continuity of structures, it avoids the danger of 'dissociated learning' which too exclusive a regional approach is liable to engender.

There are many good things in the book, e.g. an excellent general introduction to the systems, 'details' in small print; interesting, rather old-fashioned coloured plates reminding one of early 19th century atlases; a good series of radiographs; tables of movements and muscle actions; a glossary of eponyms; some 200 key references; and a good index. On the other hand, I was not impressed with the black and white illustrations: many were too small, over-detailed and difficult to interpret. But perhaps my over-riding impression is that the book is rather unexciting: one longs to see an anatomy text which will fire the imagination of the young student, and induce him not only to see the relevance of the information but to love the subject for its own sake.

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THE ESSENTIALS OF FORENSIC MEDICINE. By C. J. Polson and D. J. Gee. Third Edition. (Pp. xvii+729; 160 figures. £12.00). Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1973.

TO have to review a textbook written by one's former chief and mentor could be difficult if it were dull and failed to blow a stimulating breath of fresh air on the subject. It could be equally difficult if it were a new edition not much different from the first. Happily this third edition of *The Essentials of Forensic Medicine* spared me from any such problems. It looks good and was a delight to read.

It is interesting to look back and see how this textbook has grown. The first edition published in 1955 without illustrations was intended principally for law and medical students and was an amplification of Polson's lecture course in forensic medicine at Leeds University, although I like to regard as the real first edition the bound volume of the lectures in type-script which Polson had long before made available to students in the library of the Leeds Medical School. The second edition of 1965 enabled Polson to build on a firm foundation and establish his book as a standard text; the material was enlarged and revised, illustrations were added, some of them in colour, and the bibliography was expanded. This third edition might well have been just a revision but it has taken on a completely new look. With the collaboration of David Gee who succeeded Polson to the Chair of Forensic Medicine at Leeds, there has been a re-arrangement of the text, considerable revision and enlargement of the chapters, the introduction of numerous illustrations and an extensive bibliography to each chapter. It contains the chapters usually found in textbooks of forensic medicine but they have now sensibly omitted discussion of the finer points of blood testing and grouping, an increasingly difficult subject properly in the field of forensic science, and they have added chapters on the scene of crime, anaesthetic deaths, the battered child and sudden natural death.

The book has grown in area, thickness, weight and price, the original £1.10s. having risen to £12. This cost now puts it beyond the personal ownership of most undergraduates but this was not by accident; the authors acceded to the request of the publishers to turn the book into one for pathologists and postgraduate students. They succeeded admirably; every pathologist coming face to face with medico-legal work must have a copy available for easy reference. It is an essential standard text for every medical and law library. What of the